

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Amend paragraph [0022] as follows:

[0022] Each of the end pieces 14, 16 preferably is formed as a turned metal component, such as on a CNC (computer numerical controlled) machine, and includes a respective interface portion 28, 30 for insertion in the open ends 24, 26 of the inner tube member 12. The interface portions 28, 30 are preferably friction fit into the ends 24, 26 of the inner tube member 12 to form a direct mechanical connection between the ends 24, 26 and the inner tube member 12. Additionally, an adhesive may be provided on the interface portions 28, 30 for forming a rigid connection between the end pieces 14, 16 and the inner tube member 12. With the end pieces 14, 16 thus connected to the inner tube member 12, the end pieces 14, 16 are properly aligned relative to each other in preparation for the operation of applying the composite material 18 to the shaft 10.

Amend paragraph [0024] as follows:

[0024] It should also be noted that the construction of the present shaft 10, as illustrated in Fig. 5, provides improved load transfer characteristics for transferring torque loads between the opposing end pieces 14, 16. Specifically, multiple load paths are defined between the end pieces 14, 16. A first load path comprises the connection 44 between the composite material 12 and the end pieces 14, 16, which is facilitated by the knurled surfaces 21, 23 to form a rigid connection after the wet or uncured composite material is deposited within the grooves of the knurled surfaces 21, 23 and cured, locking the

hardened composite material 18 to the end pieces 14, 16. A second load path is defined by the connection 46

A3  
(cont'd)

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Amend paragraph [0047] as follows:

[0047] From the above description, it should be apparent that the present invention provides a unique manufacture for a composite shaft which further provides for economies in the manufacturing process. The one-piece design process described herein eliminates tool extraction and preparation processes, as well as avoids the critical end piece bonding process associated with prior construction. Additionally a tube machining operation for facing off the ends of the tube prior to installation of the end pieces is also avoided. This invention preferably utilizes end pieces turned on high speed CNC (computer numerical controlled) equipment along with an inexpensive thin metal tube to provide stability for the fabrication and curing process. While a winding assembly process is introduced, this process time is only a small fraction of the total time of the operations associated with prior processes which are common practice in the art of composite shaft fabrication. Further, the shaft is complete in the "as wound" state after a cure cycle and requires no subsequent operations, such as machining, bonding, or balancing.

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